DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 047 874 24 RC 005 117

AUTHOR	Chilcott, John H.; Garcia, Jerry P.
TITLE	Laguna Indian Reservation and Acoma Indian Reservation, Laguna-Acoma Junior and Senior High School: Community Background Reports. The National Study of American Indian Education, Series I, No. 16, Final Report.
INSTITUTION	Chicago Univ., Ill.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Bureau of Research.
BUREAU NO	BR-8-0147
PUB DATE	70
CONTRACT	OEC-0-8-080147-2805
NOTE	11p.
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*American Indians, *Community Characteristics, Demography, Economic Climate, Educational Facilities, *National Surveys, Population Distribution, *Reservations (Indian), Rural Areas, School Community Relationship, *Secondary Schools

ABSTRACT

Location, climate, population, economy, government, and social conditions of the Laguna and Acoma Indian reservations in New Mexico are discussed in this community background report. In addition, education is discussed in terms of the Laguna-Acoma Junior and Senior High School; this school, which serves students in grades 7 through 12 from both reservations, is operated as a public school and is financed by both Federal and state governments. The school's organization, staff, curriculum, student population, physical plant, and relationships with the community are described. Maps of the area are appended. (JH)

ED047874

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

BR 8-0147
PA 24
RC

The National Study of American Indian Education

Project OEC-0-8-080147-2805

Final Report

RECEIVED
MAR 31 1971
NMSU
E.R.I.C.

Community Background Reports

Series I

No. 16

LAGUNA INDIAN RESERVATION
and
ACOMA INDIAN RESERVATION

Laguna-Acoma Junior and Senior High School

1970

John H. Chilcott
Jerry P. Garcia

RC 005 117

NATIONAL STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

The attached paper is one of a number which make up the Final Report of the National Study of American Indian Education.

This Study was conducted in 1968-69-70 with the aid of a grant from the United States Office of Education, OEC-0-8-080147-2805.

The Final Report consists of five Series of Papers:

I. Community Backgrounds of Education in the Communities Which Have Been Studied.

II. The Education of Indians in Urban Centers.

III. Assorted Papers on Indian Education--mainly technical papers of a research nature.

IV. The Education of American Indians--Substantive Papers.

V. A Survey of the Education of American Indians.

The Final Report Series will be available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service after they have been announced in Research in Education. They will become available commencing in August, 1970, and the Series will be completed by the end of 1970.

C O N T E N T S

1. Laguna Indian Reservation

2. Acoma Indian Reservation

3. Laguna-Acoma Junior and Senior High School

LAGUNA INDIAN RESERVATION

Location and Climate

The Laguna Indian Reservation is located approximately 45 miles west of Albuquerque, New Mexico, its tribal lands astride two major transportation links to the west, the Santa Fe Railroad and U.S. Highway 66 (Map 1). The reservation itself takes its name from the village of Laguna founded in 1697. Currently, there are seven reservation villages--Laguna, Casa Blanca, Encinal, Mesita, Paguate, Paraje, and Seama (Map 2).

The Pueblo is bordered on the north by Mt. Taylor and on the south-southwest by Brush Mountain; and other relatively high mesas throughout Acoma. Flatlands are scattered throughout on the West. Lava beds border the reservation. The only river of any importance is the Rio San Jose River. Rainfall is sparse and much of the land is arid.

The Laguna men have traditionally preferred to engage in stock raising and farming. Partly for this reason, the population has shifted location over the years in search of more adequate water supplies. The current farming villages have been established around irrigable areas. The maximum acreage recorded as being irrigated was 2,546 acres in 1911. In 1959, reservation rangeland consisted of 404,763 acres with a carrying capacity of 11,355 sheep and 902 cattle.

Population

The population of the seven villages of Laguna is 5,102 as of January 1, 1969, distributed as follows: Casa Clanca 238, Encinal 330, Laguna 1,293, Mesita 616, Paguate 1,274, Paraje 624, and Seama 727.

The Laguna Indians are considered relatively progressive in that they have been more willing than many tribes to accept new ideas and techniques. Two basic reasons have been offered for this willingness to change. First, tribal land is located on a main railroad line and recently on a major highway, so that there has been extensive contact with outside influences. Second, some of the missionaries and teachers of past years have married into the tribe and at times have even served as tribal governors.

Economy

Wage work has replaced farming and stock raising as the prime source of income. The most important contributor to job opportunities is Nitronics, Inc., an electronics factory. It provided 121 Indian jobs as of May, 1968, more than half of the reservation employment opportunities. The factory offers a variety of assembly jobs. Total employment on the reservation is 230. Lagunas have uranium mines on their land. These have provided more jobs.

Twenty two percent of the population have worked at such occupations as welding, electrical assembly, excavating, grading, and paving of roads, or in construction. Primary concentracion has been on road building or

repairing, and in carpentry or other construction-related work. Again, most experience in mining has been due to the operations of a single firm--Anaconda's uranium mine. The demand for uranium has not kept pace with the ability to produce and therefore a significant cyclical element has been introduced into Indian mining employment.

Government

Laguna has a progressive tribal government which is secular, its members elected annually by adult male tribal members. Interest in tribal politics is great and absentee ballots are employed by those living away from the pueblo. The constitution by which the government rules was adopted in 1958.

Social Conditions

Nearly 58 percent of the population aged 16 and over are married; and about 29 percent have never married. The lack of on-reservation employment opportunities may be a factor in the relatively high percentage who have never married.

Median educational attainment for the women is eleven years, but only ten for men. Laguna women with some college experience account for 3.5 percent of the total working age, while less than one percent of men have completed high school; 33.6 percent of the women received diplomas.

Housing

Most of the houses are of stone structure and placed in scattered fashion. This is true for all of the villages. There are about forty or fifty new homes and these are arranged in streets.

ACOMA

On U.S. Highway 66, eastward from Gallup to Albuquerque, highway billboards complete with stereotyped feathered Indian figures beckon tourists crossing the continent to visit "Indian Country" and the "Sky City" of Acoma. And, it is just a few miles before reaching Laguna that signs point to the farming communities of McCartys and Acomita, just south of Highway 66, the residence of most of the families of the Acoma Indian Reservation.

The mesa top village of Acoma itself stands about 15 miles to the south in a spectacular setting 365 feet above the surrounding valley. Accessible until now by gravel road, a new paved highway nearing completion will encourage the tourists to come, and make travel to the outside and to school easier for those still living on the mesa top.

Physical Characteristics

Most of the Acoma Indian Reservation consists of pinon-juniper lands (156,770 acres), open grass lands (81,504 acres), merchantable forest (6,540 acres), and croplands (2000 acres). Some 1406 acres are devoted to homesites, schools, and fallow cropland.

Natural resources in the area include low-grade uranium, coal, farmlands, grasslands, forestlands, lava and building stone.

Population

There are about 2500 persons living on the Acoma Reservation. Most of these live in McCartys and Acomita, although they return to the main Pueblo of Acoma for ceremonials. There are several Anglo and Spanish men who have married into the community, most of these living in McCartys.

The clothes worn by most people conform to contemporary style. Men generally wear work clothes, and women wear everyday apparel. Young adults like to follow modern trends.

Transportation

The main mode of transportation is by pick-up trucks. People leaving the community provide their own transportation or travel with others. A few use public transportation, when it is possible.

McCartys and Acomita

The villages of McCartys and Acomita both contain churches. The tribal center and community center are located in Acomita, as is the BIA day elementary school. A Community Action Program is located in McCartys.

Housing

In the main Pueblo of Acoma, housing consists of one and two storied, attached, traditional adobe buildings arranged about a ceremonial area. In the community of McCartys and Acomita, the houses are scattered in an informal fashion.

Although detached and surrounded by yards, the homes are built in the traditional adobe style. The majority of homes are substandard, although community attempts are being made to improve them.

The front yards of most homes are of dirt with few playthings; some have traditional ovens in the yard. Most people have television sets, electricity and a domestic water supply.

Economy

Wage work has become the main occupation of the people of Acoma, although farming and stock raising continue and cattle ownership is a mark of wealth.

Tourism provides employment as guides. Mining also creates jobs. The level of unemployment is very high, however, rising to 50-60 percent for men and women.

Recent federal government programs have created employment. Among these are Community Action Program, CEP, Neighborhood Youth Corps. Aid to Dependent Children and the distribution of surplus commodities also provide some relief.

Most people continue to live under poverty conditions.

Tourism and fishing are areas in which economic development is taking place.

Some Indians have left Acoma through BIA relocation and individual means. College educated youths often do not return because of limited opportunity here. Most of these people now reside in cities. Migration is not great, however.

Government

Acoma is a more traditional community than Laguna. The Caciques, or religious leaders appoint the governor and the tribal council.

Recent Developments

Some of the major changes in the community within the last five years have included: CAP and Headstart program, Home improvement program, Community Library, Improved roads, Indoor plumbing, Telephone service, and the Neighborhood Youth Corps.

EDUCATION

Laguna-Acoma Junior and Senior High School, serving grades 7-12, is a modern school complex dating from 1962, located just north of U.S. Highway 66, three miles from the village of New Laguna (Map II). It is to this day school that pupils are bused daily from the Acoma and Laguna villages for distances varying up to twenty miles.

Physical Plant

There are 24 classrooms in modern buildings constructed of bricks. The library contains a little Indian culture material and every classroom has audio-visual aids. There is one cafeteria which serves the whole school. No dormitories are available in the immediate area. There is one teachers' lounge and the athletic facilities and equipment are in good condition. The houses for the teachers are constructed of brick (one to three bedroom) and are located to the west of the school. The school is fenced off, literally and socially from the community.

To a certain extent, some landscaping has been done to develop a more physically attractive school setting.

Organization and Finance

As noted above, Laguna-Acoma Junior and Senior High School is a part of a school district with a total of 14 schools. The school board of five members is elected every two years on a staggered basis, each member serving for six years. Anyone who is a legal resident can file for election to the board. There are no Indians on the School Board. Two Indian candidates for the last open position lost when Indian votes were split between them.

The school is operated as a public school and is organized as follows: School Board; Superintendent; Co-ordinators; Principal; Teachers. It is financed by the Federal and State Governments and receives Johnson O'Malley moneys.

Staff

There are 29 teachers and currently there are no Indian teachers on the staff. There are three janitors, five cooks, and seven bus drivers.

Pupils

The majority of the students' ages vary from 13 to 18 years of age. Current enrollment (1969) is as follows: seventh--108, eighth--102, ninth--108, tenth--76, eleventh--81, twelfth--84. Of this total enrollment, there are 464 Indians and 95 non-Indians, largely Mexican-Americans.

There is no dormitory on campus and the pupils are bused from their villages. Since Acoma and Laguna languages are based on the same dialect, it is easy for them to communicate, while the Spanish-speaking students very rarely converse with the Indian students, except in English.

Curriculum

The curriculum of the Laguna-Acoma High School is standard state curriculum although the materials are developed locally. There are Adult Education and Headstart Programs available through community projects.

There are extra-curricular activities in the school including an Indian Dancing Club which holds annual dances in the school gym. The Club invites several Indian schools to participate. There are no Indian culture courses nor are Indians employed as teachers in the regular school program.

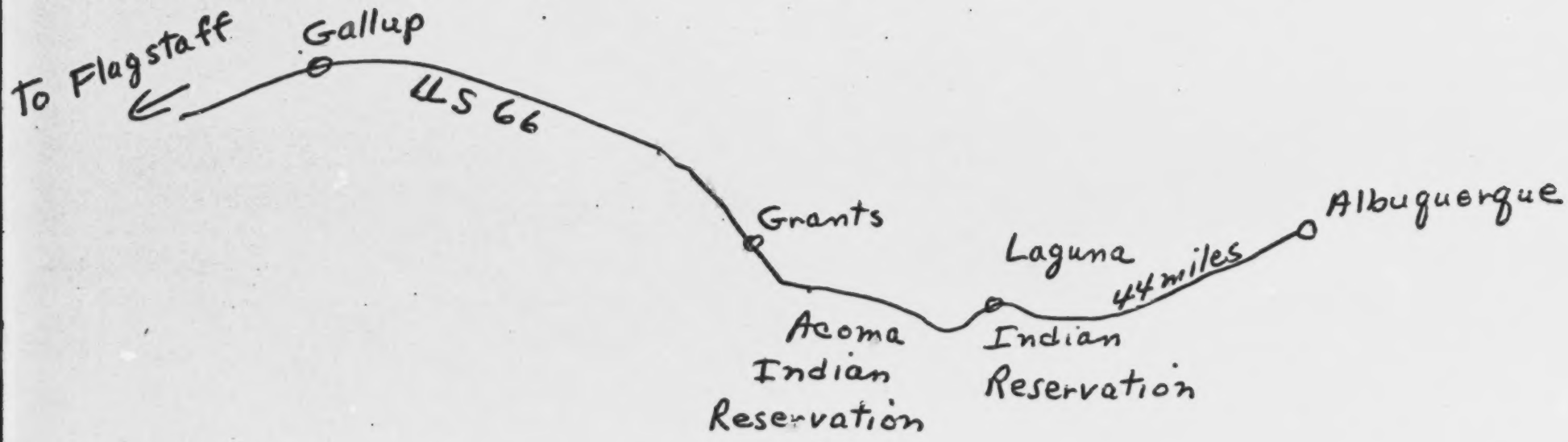
School Calendar

Children are permitted to take Good Friday, Easter, and Christmas as holidays. The school does not close for any feast days or occupational activities. The individual students may be given permission to be absent at times during the planting and harvesting seasons. These overlap with the school year.

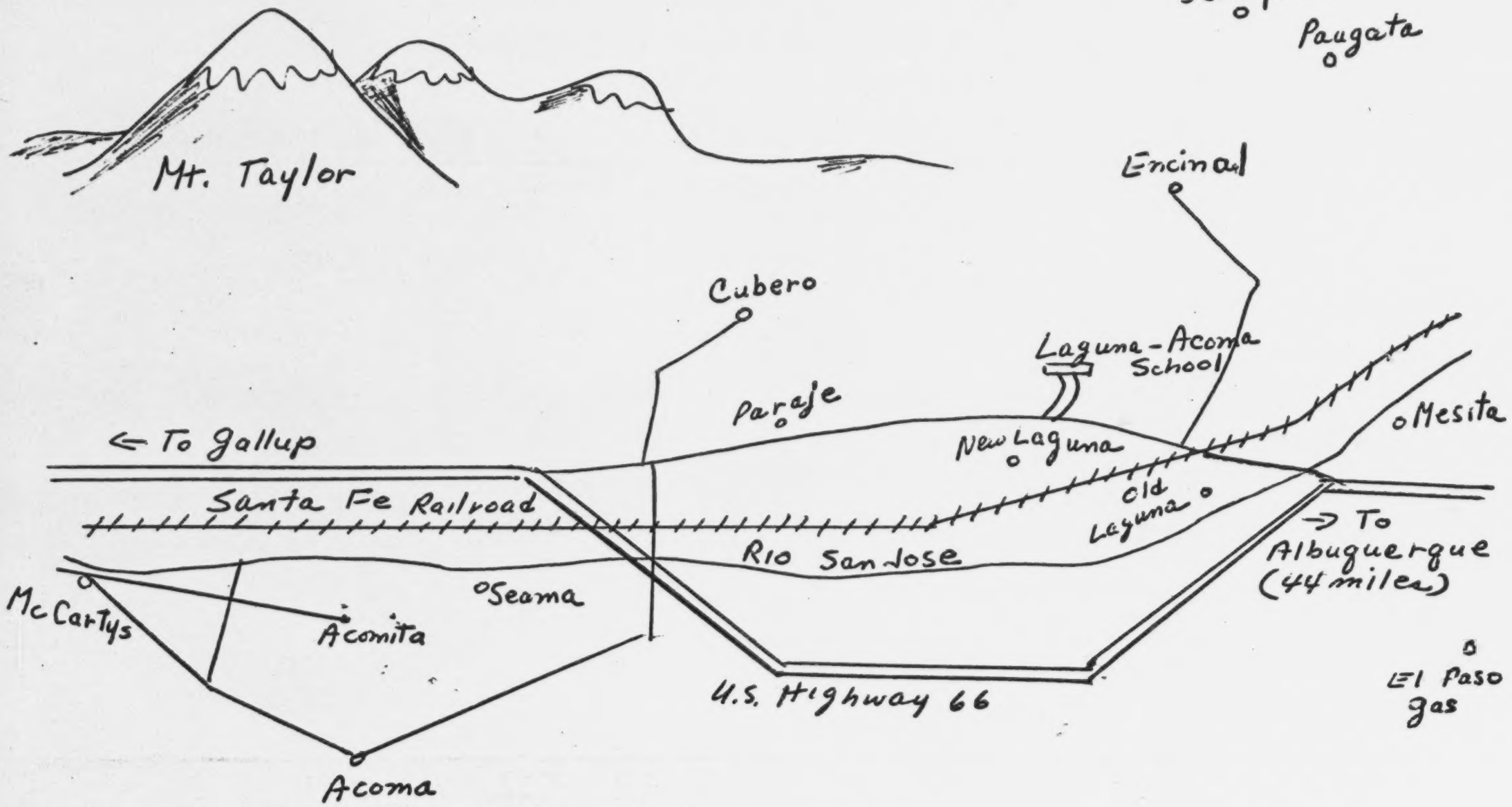
School Community Relations

The community realizes the importance of education. However, they often are not too familiar with how their school relates. Some people feel that the school "pushes" too many students through school without adequate preparation. The dropout rate is quite high, and a matter for concern.

School-community communication is limited. Tribal officials and school supervisors do not get together. There is no PTA organization. Few people are informed about school activities by the students. The school newsletter, which the school puts out every month, is the only means of getting informed about school activities, and does not seem to be adequate in itself to bring the school and community into closer relationship. Currently, Laguna-Acoma High School is not used as a community center.



MAP I Laguna - Acoma Indian Reservations



MAP II. Villages of Laguna - Acoma